

CLAIMS

We claim:

1. A microscope slide composition comprising:

5 a) a substrate with a surface comprising discrete sites, said sites separated by a distance of less than 50 μm , wherein said substrate is formatted to the dimensions of a microscope slide; and
 b) a population of microspheres comprising at least a first and a second subpopulation, wherein said first subpopulation comprises a first bioactive agent and said second subpopulation comprises a second bioactive agent wherein said microspheres are randomly distributed on said 10 surface.

2. A composition according to claim 1, wherein said sites are separated by a distance of less than 25 μm .

15 3. A composition according to claim 1, wherein said sites are separated by a distance of less than 15 μm .

4. A composition according to claim 1, 2 or 3, wherein said sites are separated by a distance of at least about 5 μm .

20 5. A microscope slide composition comprising:

 a) a substrate with a surface comprising discrete sites, wherein said substrate is formatted to the dimensions of a microscope slide;
 b) a population of microspheres, comprising at least a first and a second subpopulation, 25 wherein said first subpopulation comprises a bioactive agent and said second subpopulation does not comprise a bioactive agent, wherein said microspheres are randomly distributed on said surface.

6. The composition according to claim 1 or 5, wherein the distance between centers of a first and second microsphere of said first subpopulation is at least 5 μm .

30 7. The composition according to claim 6, wherein the distance between said first and second microsphere of said first subpopulation is less than about 100 μm .

8. A composition according to claim 1 or 5, wherein said substrate further comprises first and second assay locations, wherein said first and second subpopulations are distributed in said first and second assay locations.

35 9. A composition according to claim 8, wherein the distance between a first and second microsphere of said first subpopulation is less than about 100 μm .

10. A composition according to claim 9, wherein the distance between a first and second member of said first subpopulation is less than about 50 μm .

5 11. A composition according to claim 9, wherein the distance between a first and second member of said first subpopulation is less than about 15 μm .

10 12. A composition according to claim 9, 10 or 11, wherein the distance between said first and second member of said first subpopulation is at least about 5 μm .

13. A composition according to claim 5, wherein said second subpopulation comprises a detectable signal.

14. A composition according to claim 5, wherein said second subpopulation does not comprise a detectable signal.

15 15. An apparatus comprising:

a) a detection instrument; and

b) the composition according to claim 1 or claim 5, wherein said composition is in said

20 instrument.

16. A method for making a microscope slide composition comprising:

a) providing a substrate with a surface comprising wells, wherein said substrate is formatted to the dimensions of a microscope slide;

25 b) randomly distributing microspheres on said substrate such that individual wells comprise microspheres, wherein said microspheres comprise at least a first and a second subpopulation, wherein said first subpopulation comprises a bioactive agent and said second subpopulation does not comprise a bioactive agent.

30 17. The method according to claim 16, wherein said first subpopulation further comprises first and second sub-sub-populations, each comprising a first and second bioactive agent, respectively.

18. A method for making a microscope slide composition comprising:

35 a) providing a substrate with a surface comprising discrete sites, said sites separated by a distance of less than 50 μm , wherein said substrate is formatted to the dimensions of a microscope slide; and

b) randomly distributing population of microspheres comprising at least a first and a second subpopulation, wherein said first subpopulation comprises a first bioactive agent and said second subpopulation comprises a second bioactive agent.

19. The method according to claim 18 wherein said wells are separated by a distance of less than 25 µm.

5 20. The method according to claim 18, wherein said wells are separated by a distance of less than 15 µm.

21. The method according to claim 18, wherein the ratio of said first and said second subpopulation is at least 1: 36.

10 22. The method according to claim 18, wherein the ratio of said first and said second subpopulation is at least 1: 100.

15 23. The method according to claim 18, wherein the distance between the centers a first and second microsphere of said first subpopulation is at least 5 µm.

24. The method according to claim 18, wherein the distance between the centers of a first and second microsphere of said first subpopulation is at least 15 µm.

20 25. The method according to claim 18, wherein the distance between a first and second microsphere of said first subpopulation is at least 50 µm.

26. A method of making microscope slide arrays comprising:

25 a) providing a substrate comprising at least first and second holes, wherein the diameter of said first and second holes is of a diameter equal to the diameter of a first and second fiber optic bundle, respectively;

 b) inserting said first and second fiber optic bundles into said first and second holes, respectively; and

30 c) cutting said substrate such that the cross section of said first and second fiber bundles is framed by said substrate.